

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at line 14 of page 11 with the following amended paragraph.

--A thermoplastic rigid rod polymer is a meltable polymer having constitutional or configurational units that form a generally linear chain that is rigid. Thermoplastic rigid rod polymers therefore may have increased strength compared with other thermoplastics. Thermoplastic rigid rod polymers may also have improved processing characteristics and good compatibility with other polymers compared with other polymers of similar strength. Thermoplastic rigid rod polymers may be cross-linked by cooling down from an extrusion process. Most other polymers require a radiation or chemical process to cross-link. Thus, a medical device made from a thermoplastic rigid rod polymer in combination with another polymer may have a cross-linked portion, which may increase strength, and a non-cross-linked portion, which may increase softness, flexibility or other suitable attribute. Therefore a device incorporating a thermoplastic rigid rod polymer may provide a combination of physical properties not available with a different polymer. In some embodiments, the thermoplastic rigid rod polymer may be substituted poly(1,4-phenylene). In some embodiments, the substituted poly(1,4-phenylene) includes a plurality of benzoyl substituted 1,4-phenylene units. Some of these polymers may be available commercially under the PARMAX name from Mississippi Polymer Technologies.--